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The Eighty-third Annual AVMA Meeting

Synopsis Of The Daily Proceedings

ON MONDAY, August 19, 1946: Dr. James Farquharson, president of the American Veterinary Medical Association, paid tribute to the Army Veterinary Corps in World War II. However, the veterinary leader did not say as much for the U.N.R.R.A. "The quality of veterinary service sponsored by the U.N.R.R.A. has been far below the accepted standards of the profession," he declared. "Many responsible duties and positions were assigned to men whose background, training and experience did not justify the appointments." Dr. Farquharson also levelled sharp criticism at some retail biologic and drug interests, which he said, "are organized to prey upon the livestock industry and flood the country with nostrums." He charged that they have now entered some of the schools of pharmacy with their propaganda. As a result of their activities the health of our livestock is endangered."

Dr. Farquharson sharply criticized some phases of present-day veterinary education. "I believe the educators are making a serious mistake in placing too much emphasis on scholastic attainment and disregarding the rural background, personality and psychological attitude of the applicant in relation to the true objectives of organized veterinary medicine," he declared. "The sudden impulse to dot the country with veterinary colleges is most unfortunate. Veterinary colleges are not created overnight. In most instances it appears to be ill-conceived and premature."

Dr. John R. Mohler, Washington, D. C., retired chief of the U. S. Bureau of Animal Industry, was presented the national American Veterinary Medical Association Award.

A plan for better animal disease control safeguards in this country, through a nation-wide system for prompt reporting of livestock disease outbreaks, was recommended by a national committee, headed by Dr. Chas. W. Bower of Topeka, Kansas.

An emergency feed conservation program for farmers and poultry raisers was recommended by the nutrition committee of the AVMA embracing these 3 points:

"Feed only efficient animals."

"Eliminate from flocks and herds the inefficient units."

"Maintain only the number of animal units the owner is equipped to care for."

The association's special committee on diseases of small animals, in a report signed by Dr. Wayne H. Riser formerly of Des Moines, Iowa, advocated:

A greater portion of veterinary research funds for special investigation of small animal diseases—particularly the group known an encephalitis, hysteria or convulsions.

A formula of practical methods for parasite and disease control in dog-breeding kennels.

Provision for more specialized training of young veterinarians to serve in the small animal field.

Uniform standards of methods and procedures in treatment of small animals.

Greater use of movies and lantern slides in training practitioners.

Dr. Sigler, the veterinary organization's representative to the Horse and Mule Association of America, said that the demand for riding horses promises to become still greater in the next 12 months.

The association's annual Humane Act Award was voted to John Newton, a 12-year-old school boy, of Columbus, Ohio, because he had done more than a man's job in helping to establish National Cat Week, a recognized national observance in the United States.

The Twelfth International Veterinary Congress Prize, highest award of veterinary science, was presented to Dr. T. H. Ferguson, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, at the opening session.

ON TUESDAY, August 20, 1946: A need for more veterinarians in America's expanding livestock industry and to meet increased public health demands was reported to the American Veterinary Medical Convention by a national veterinary committee on postwar planning. Pointing to the opportunity for farm youths to enter this profession, or for persons who have a natural love for animans, the committee headed by Dr. H. L. Foust of Iowa State College reported a total of approximately 15,000 veterinarians in the United States. Of this number, the committee said, 7,500 are over 50 years of age. There are now about 12,000 veterinarians in practice in this country. Dr. Foust emphasized that the public must be kept informed of the character of professional veterinary service. He pointed to the need for internship in the training of veterinary students.

Veterinarians from all parts of the nation heard an appeal for contributions of veterinary medical books to the Army Medical Library by Dr. J. G. Hardenbergh, Chicago, Ill., who represents the American Veterinary Medical Association on the Army Library's Association of Honorary Consultants.

A concerted effort to publicize and enforce the Code of Ethics of the American Veterinary Medical Association was advocated by its national code committee, of which Dr. S. W. Haigler is chairman.

Three reasons why penicillin is not a "cure-all" for animal diseases were advanced by Dr. I. A. Merchant and Dr. R. A. Packer, of the veterinary hygiene department of the Iowa State College. They ascribed some failures of penicillin to these factors: First, some strains of bacteria were found to produce penicillinase, a substance which destroys penicillin and prevents it from having any effect. Second, some strains of bacteria acquire a resistance to penicillin in the course of prolonged treatment with gradually increasing quantities of the drug. Third, bacteria of some types have a natural resistance to penicillin, regardless of previous contact with the drug.

American veterinarians were told of the progress Japanese veterinary research workers have made in recent experiments with 3 major types of livestock disease. Maj. Russell M. Madison of the U. S. Army Veterinary Corps reported these results on 3 diseases at Japan's Institute for Veterinary Research, at Pusan, Korea:

(1) "Third virus" disease of swine, a chronic ailment affecting young pigs; the Japanese have developed a serum which they claim will protect day-old pigs against the infection.

(2) Rinderpest, a cattle disease which is a constant threat to Korea from across the Manchurian border; the Japanese maintain an immune zone by vaccinating cattle in a 10-mile-wide belt along the frontier.

(3) Fowl pest, known as Newcastle disease in Europe and America; the Japanese have developed a chick-embryo vaccine for which high efficiency is claimed in establishing immunity for from 2 to 5 months.

Major Madison explained that "third virus" disease of swine is so called because it is the orient's important virus causing illness in pigs. The others are hog cholera and swine influenza.

The dairy cattle disease committee in submitting its report, described the re-

sults of a year's specialized study of respiratory ailments in cattle. Dr. R. N. Shaw of Shrewsbury, Mass., chairman of the committee, pointed out that mortality of dairy animals due to calf pneumonia has been very high in most areas of the United States. Repeated tests have demonstrated that calves raised with nurse-cows are more vigorous than pail-fed calves and less susceptible to this disease.

The veterinary group reported also on the successful use of sulfathalidine to control diarrhea in calves and penicillin and sulfamerazine in treatment of various respiratory diseases of cattle.

There were over 10,000 fatal cases of rabies in the last reportable year, according to federal government figures. The death toll included 53 persons, 9,067 dogs, 690 head of farm livestock, 419 cats, and 311 other animals. With rabies outbreaks continuing to mount in many sections of the nation, a special rabies committee recommended that each state immediately arrange with the states bordering it, to exchange information on the location and incidence of rabies. Thus, states would be alerted to foci of infection outside their borders sufficiently in advance to enable them to take defensive measures.

Forty-nine different steps which the veterinarian must take in giving a dairy cow a health checkup were outlined by the committee on milk hygiene. These include such measures as testing the animal for tuberculosis and brucellosis, checking to be sure the udder is healthy, examining the milk, and checking for skin diseases, arthritis and other maladies.

Dr. P. V. Neuzil of Blairstown, Iowa, of the association's poultry committee, told of 7 years' progress under the National Poultry Improvement Plan, and said 47 states were now cooperating. One of the worst problems of America's poultry industry—pullorum disease—is gradually being brought under control.

Continued and intensive study of the vitamin and mineral requirements of sheep on ordinary farm rations was urged by a special committee on sheep diseases. In the case of pregnancy disease, the committee observed that acute thiamin deficiency appears to be a predisposing factor in the thin range ewe. Whether the same thing was true for the well-fed farm ewe was a "moot question," the report said. The committee also reported that internal parasites cause more losses among farm sheep than all other diseases combined.

Discussing poisonous plants, the committee emphasized the need for continued efforts to develop satisfactory antidotes for, with the single exception of treatment for hydrocyanic acid poisoning, there are no dependable satisfactory antitodes for plant poisonings in animals.

Dr. Henry Welch and Dr. William A. Randall, chief and bacteriologist, respectively, in the penicillin division of the national food and drug administration, said ample supplies of streptomycin should be available in the near future.

Recent progress in determining the usefulness of streptomycin was reviewed by Alfred G. Karlson and William H. Feldman, officials of the experimental medicine division of the Mayo Foundation, Rochester, Minn. In laboratory animals, the Mayo investigators reported, streptomycin has been found effective in controlling tuberculosis, brucellosis, leptospirosis, tularemia and salmonella infections. In some cases, apparent cures of tuberculosis in guinea pigs were reported. They cautioned that the use of the new drug in treatment of animal diseases must be based on intensive study of dosage, absorption, rate of excretion, and therapeutic efficacy against infections of the various species.

Dr. W. E. Cotton, of Alabama Polytechnic Institute, was presented the national Borden Award for outstanding achievement in contributing to the control of dairy cattle diseases.

ON WEDNESDAY, August 21, 1946: Col. Jesse D. Derrick of Boston, discussing sanitary problems in connection with the army's inspection and supervision of fish supplies, said that fresh fish was the only acceptable grade. He described how to tell a fresh fish from a stale one by simply looking at it. Fresh fish have a bright appearance. The eyes are full and clear, without opacity. The gills are bright red and the gill covers and mouths are closed. The scales are glistening and adherent. The abdominal walls are firm and elastic, with no evidence of bloating or discoloration and the flesh is firm, elastic and tight on the bones. "Freezing does not improve the quality of fish," he advised, "and they must not be thawed and refrozen."

Lt. Col. Frank A. Todd, an officer of the veterinary corps in the American-controlled zone of Germany, described European food production problems. A number of outbreaks of serious livestock diseases—anthrax, hog cholera, swine erysipelas, foot and mouth disease and others—have been encountered and effectively dealt with by military and civilian veterinarians, he reported.

Lt. Col. Benjamin D. Blood, chief of the veterinary branch of the army air forces said that air transportation presents a new set of problems in efforts to control the spread of animal diseases. "Well enforced quarantine measures for controlling the spread of animal diseases are indicated," Col. Blood declared, "but they must be directed in such a manner as to provide the least possible interference with the service for which air transport is best suited—speed."

The story of secret wartime scientific research to develop counter-measures against threatened Axis germ warfare in America was told by Dr. Richard E. Shope, Princeton, N. J., member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. He described how the introduction of rinderpest, a highly fatal cattle plague, on this continent—either accidentally or on purpose—during the war would have had serious consequences in terms of meat supplies and animal and human health. Through the growth of virus in embryonating eggs, an economical and readily-prepared vaccine was developed which was completely safe for use in cattle and conferred a solid immunity against rinderpest.

A nation-wide program to assure better, more wholesome food for the public, through better health safeguards set up by states, counties, and municipalities, was proposed by the association's national committee on food hygiene.

Sulfamerazine, one of the newer sulfa drugs, has proved remarkably effective in the treatment of pneumonia in cattle, according to Dr. J. L. McAuliff of Cortland, N. Y. A recovery rate of 95 per cent was experienced in the treatment of 122 adult cattle suffering from pneumonia or hemorrhagic septicemia or both, Dr. McAuliff said. In 27 cases of pneumonia in young calves, the recovery rate was 93 per cent.

Two veterinary scientists, reporting to the research section, shed new light on the importance of sugar and warmth in treatment of the so-called "baby pig disease," in which the pigs tremble and jerk like jitterbugs. Technically known as hypoglycemia, the disease is accompanied by a lowering of the blood sugar. It occurs among pigs from 1 to 4 days old and causes weakness, shivering, jerking, coma and often death.

Colonel McCallum, chief of the veterinary division of the surgeon general's office said, "no other profession or group begins to approach the veterinarian's skill in the task of food inspection for the military services." Veterinarians, he pointed out, are no longer only animal doctors, but members of a profession of varied yet related scientific skills that must be correlated and represented on a united front by a strong national association.

On the moral ground that wild life is

entitled to protection as much as we ourselves, a national committee of prominent veterinarians called for an intensive program of research on diseases of wild animals. Encouragement was found in the fact that some veterinary colleges are planning courses on diseases of wild life.

Diagnosis and treatment of poultry diseases presents a challenge and an obligation to the general practitioner of veterinary medicine. Dr. Cliff D. Carpenter of Chicago, Ill., acted as moderator of a discussion, which was developed by Dr. B. S. Pomeroy of the University of Minnesota. First speaker in a panel discussion of poultry practice, Dr. C. Harvey Smith of Crown Point, Ind., said every general veterinarian when consulted by a client who has sick birds, should be able to make a diagnosis and recommend the proper course of treatment and management.

ON THURSDAY, August 22, 1946: The following officers of the American Veterinary Medical Association were installed: President, B. T. Simms, Washington, D. C.; president-elect, W. A. Hagan, Ithaca, New York, (Dean of New York State Veterinary College at Cornell University); first vice-president, Ronald Gwatkin, Hull, Quebec; second vice-president, Ralph West, Sr., St. Paul, Minn.; third vice-president, John Gillman, Memphis, Tenn.; fourth vice-president, C. R. Curtis, Portage, Wis.; fifth vice-president, E. L. Stubbs, Philadelphia, Pa., and treasurer, J. V. Lacroix, Evanston, Ill.

Dr. Ronald Gwatkin, chief research officer of the Animal Diseases Research Institute at Hull, Quebec, described the use of regular and variant strains of organisms for identifying and segregating the birds affected by pullorum disease. Antigens prepared from bacteria found in affected birds were used in diagnosing the different strains of the disease. Dr. Gwatkin stressed the importance of knowing the types of pullorum infection involved in chick losses and of using the appropriate antigens.

Dr. Alva C. Kelman of Madison, Wis., described the results of tests made at the University of Wisconsin with mastitis-affected cows from 12 dairy herds and reported that the quantity of distilled water used in a penicillin solution for the treatment of mastitis makes little difference.

Geriatrics, defined as the science and art of treating an aged patient, was the subject of a talk by Dr. Gerry B. Schnelle of Boston's Angell Memorial Animal Hospital. Dr. Schnelle made the statement that aged dogs present one of the greatest challenges to the skill of the veterinarian engaged in small animal practice.

Clinical use of sex hormones and gland extracts in an effort to correct sterility in farm animals continues to prove disappointing, according to Dr. F. N. Andrews, assistant professor of animal husbandry at Purdue University. The use of such extracts had produced irregular and often unfavorable results, he said. However, he reported, that a thyroid extract known as thyroprotein has given encouraging results in the stimulation of milk and egg production, and in the correction of sterility.

Development of a highly effective procedure to control swine brucellosis, which has been spreading rapidly in farming areas, was announced by Dr. L. M. Hutchings of Purdue University's Department of Veterinary Science.

He outlined this control method as follows:

"Blood-test the entire herd."

"If infection is present, consider the entire breeding unit as infected."

"Raise pigs from the infected brood stock; blood-test and segregate the pigs from the sows at weaning time; place disease-free pigs on clean premises; maintain this segregation until the infected stock is eliminated."

"Confine all subsequent blood-testing to the prospective gilts and boars. If reacting pigs appear, remove them from the negative group."

"Breed only negative gilts to clean boars."

Dr. Donald W. Baker, of New York State Veterinary College, Ithaca, N. Y., said the difficulty of obtaining and keeping farm labor had been increased to a serious extent by the fact that farm hands frequently became infected with bovine mange. Sarcoptic mange was said to be the most serious of the various mange and scabies infections.

Deficiency of vitamin A was blamed by a national group of veterinary authorities for many of the diseases and defects which take a heavy toll of America's baby pig crop each year.

The association's special committee on brucellosis reported that: The employment of strain 19 vaccine in adult cattle should not be permitted in brucellosis-free herds. Its use should also be discouraged in brucellosis-free accredited areas, or in modified accredited areas, or in those counties in the process of becoming accredited. The committee is aware that vaccination of adult cattle is an extensive practice, perhaps far greater than the advantages of such practice justify. Among measures to control the widespread disease, they recommend the test and slaughter method in areas where cattle population is small, use of vaccinated heifers as replacement stock in areas where the incidence of the disease is high, and the use of vaccination to help combat "abortion storms" where veterinary investigation reveals that such vaccination is a wise procedure.

Dr. James M. Murphy, associate professor of dairy husbandry at Rutgers University, Sussex, N. J., said the spread of streptococcic infection in dairy herds did not appear to be related to general management practices; instead, it was related directly to the average age of the herd. Only the hormone theory remains valid as an explanation of the greater susceptibility of older cattle, Dr. Murphy said. That theory, he explained, holds that some change occurs in the mammary gland with the passing of time—a change brought about by the role of hormones in the growth and function of the gland.

Dr. L. R. Vawter and Dr. Edward Records of the University of Nevada, described 2 distinct forms of white muscle disease among beef calves, one of them producing a swiftly fatal failure of the heart. The peracute type of white muscle disease causes lung congestion and failure of the heart action, and results in death in 6 to 12 hours. Symptoms include dullness, respiratory distress and a frothy nasal discharge. The subacute type develops more slowly causing muscular stiffness, refusal to nurse, and prostration in about a week. Degeneration is found in the muscles of the legs, trunk, neck and tongue. Most of the cases occurred in calves under a month old, and among the offspring of cows fed mainly on inferior hay during the gestation and calving period. Calf losses stopped in a week or 10 days after the pregnant and calving cows were placed on green pasture or a diet of good quality alfalfa hay.

Dr. W. A. Krehl, assistant professor in the Yale Nutrition Laboratory at New Haven, Conn., said the latest research on the perplexing problem of canine hysteria clearly indicates the dietary origin of the disease. It has been shown that the niacin requirement of the dog is markedly increased when large amounts of corn are included in the ration.

Pigs given a subcutaneous injection of swine influenza virus obtained from the lungs of an affected hog exhibited no clinical evidence of the disease but acquired a solid immunity to subsequent exposure and to attempts to infect them artificially. Intranasal application of influenza antiserum conferred a passive immunity which lasted about 12 days.

From LaJunta, Calif., comes a report by Dr. Phil K. Hudspeth of the birth to a Jersey cow of a perfectly formed calf weighing about 9 pounds—less than many human babies. The animal was only 17 inches high and 4 inches wide, but was fully developed and had a good chance of surviving.